

# DIPLOMACY DIGEST

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Hobby History

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I read it in the "Washington Post", so it must be true. It says that Diplomacy is "a favorite with Capitol Hill and embassy staffs". Keep that in mind the next time you see a gamestart with a just a D.C. post Office box as a mailing address. Also, "Games News" magazine recently listed the national best-selling adult games, compiled from monthly game store surveys. Diplomacy ranked a very respectable 5th! None of the ones above it ( Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective; Trivial Pursuit; 221B Baker Street; and Superstar Wrestling) are Avalon Hill games, so good ole dippy may well be AH's best seller! Who are all those people who buy the game? I sure that a lot of those sets never get used or even opened, but there are an awful lot of people buying this game that aren't joining the postal hobby. DiplomaCy World has for 12 years been their point of contact with the postal hobby, so lets hope it stays healthy!

DipCon 1986 will be hosted by MaryCon, as Dipcon returns to the East Coast for first time since the fabulously successful DipCon 1982. On Friday May 30 will be a Diplomacy variant Tournament, a "Tournament of Champions" (a one-rounder for 7 top placers of past Marcons), a round-table seminar with Alan Calhamer, and the first round of the DipCon tournament. Saturday and Sunday have more Dipcon rounds, and the meeting of the DipCon society, and the open gaming beer party, always popular (on Sat night). The prices are rather complicated, depending on whether you are there for Friday, all three days, whether you are local or plan to stay over, etc. But the most expensive option is F-Sa-Su, including meals from lunch Fri thru lunch Sunday, and thats \$87. Those who arrive Sat morning ( which is probably what I'll do) pay \$52. But MaryCons have always been a great bargain, and if past history repeats itself, there will be plenty of women on campus that weekend. Its held at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg Va, maybe 1 1/2 hours south of Wash DC. For full details, write KEN PEEL 8708 First Ave #t-2 Silver Spring MD 20910, (301) 495-2799. You do NOT have to show up Friday to enter the tournament; you only need to play two rounds, and you can do that with one round each on Sat and Sunday, a sensible pace. The only odd requirement that they have is that you must bring your own blankets, and, as always, don't rely on Steve Knight to wake you up in the morning.

## THE ZINE COLUMN #91

Yet another issue of Diplomacy World has come out, #41.5. At 10 pages, and no charge against people's subs, it appears that DW has plenty of writing and money (altho this is somewhat contradicted by Larry saying, "Kathy is worried about the lack of articles on file for DW.") My favorite was a delightful essay by Mr. Edi Birsan, describing how he passed himself off as a woman in postal games (or rather, didn't correct (turn to page 11)

((We'll start off with one man's view of the hobby as it was about 10 years ago. The writer is, I think, Harry Drews, and this appeared in Paroxysm #36, Aug 1976))

# THE STATE of the HOBBY

A pronounced malaise has crept into the midst of postal diplomacy over the past year. Whole I can only make a subjective assessment, it seems to me that the number of exciting, interesting, and informative zines has steadily declined and that the turnover of membership in the postal community is not bringing in the same percentage of leaders and doers as in the past. Stagnation and atrophy are the descriptive words which most readily come to my mind.

One manifestation of what has befallen us is the torpid state of the IDA ((International Diplomacy Organization)). Conceived with the finest intentions, this organization at present suffers from three problems: first, there seems to be a lack of grassroot support and enthusiasm for it; second, a few key people have done the great majority of the work in anything that has been accomplished; and three, committees that have been set up to supposedly deal with implementing the group consensus into action have been largely ineffective because of procedural hassles and too much paper.

Apparently, the sad state of affairs within the IDA and the loss of leadership of Edi Birsan has prompted a group, spearheaded by Lenard Lakofka, I think, to reevaluate the organization of the IDA. This I have no quarrel with; however, what is still lacking is a more fundamental reexamination of what would be most suitable for the present state of the hobby. Additional, I would concur with the opinions of both Robert Correll and Doug Ronson that the IDA Constitution is not being followed with respect to acting on the Lakofka et al proposals.

As far as I'm concerned, the overriding goal of any hobby organization must be to facilitate play of postal Diplomacy. Broken down into its components, this entails: 1) A way of introducing novices to the hobby so that they do not become discouraged or disgusted with playing in this medium; 2) ensuring as uninterrupted as possible playing of games underway, meaning that orphaned games and games in which the GM is no longer interested will find a new home quickly; 3) handling disputes in as fair a fashion as possible by referring them to an accepted mediator whose only influence power necessarily must be the wisdom of his decision, and the logic employed in arriving at his decision, and moral suasion; and 4) generating a history of the game and giving a reference point with which to interrelate the past, present and future.

Do any of these components of a healthy hobby require a bureaucracy to provide these services? And introduction and assimilation of new people into the hobby can be left to the Avalon Hill Company and the House of Games ((the then distributors of the game in Canada)) as a last resort. They can advertise that a postal community is in existence and can monitor the track record of any zines which wish to attract novices simply by requiring that these zines send the manufacturer complimentary copies of each and every issue. It might take time on behalf of Diplomacy's publishers but if there was no other way, these people would be responsible enough to do it. ((I should point out for those of you who may be wondering that Avalon Hill has never expressed the slightest interest in doing anything of the sort.)) Of course, at present, we do have a small dedicated group of people performing this service of making up a special zine to mail in response to inquiries. Another group rates GMs on what they hope is an objective basis. I would question the necessity of any senior body such as the IDA being needed to supervise or authorize any of these functions. A basic truth of any hobby association is that only a small number of the members will be dynamically involved in its workings, so why not allow the individual people or a small working group to do these things? If a service is necessary, then I'm sure a volunteer or two will emerge. There are two possible problems -- first, what if funding is required, or the workload becomes too heavy, and second, what if petty politics or biases intrude. Funding should almost never be a problem, subscriptions or donations can be solicited, and moreover, when you

really think about it, wouldn't the need for substantial funding (say in excess of \$100 on a given project) be an indication that something is amiss? The magnitude of expense might very well be out of line with the basic goals of the hobby. If the workload becomes excessive, then either the person(s) doing the work will ask for help, or the project will be abandoned, and if abandoned, any project worthy enough will be resumed by someone sooner or later. The nuisance of petty politics is in itself an inescapable part of the hobby; people play Diplomacy or print zines because sometimes they do want to express their own opinions ((its one of the reasons DD exists)). The only time petty politics becomes dangerous is when a good and working service or project is derailed; this is happening with many of the projects at present with the IDA. In a case such as this, we must rely on either the services of an impartial third party to help straighten out the mess or a competing person or group will spring up and attract the services of the clientel which formerly patronized the other group.

Essentially, what I am saying is that demon democracy is fatal to a service organization for this hobby if this democracy means that the doers and volunteers become turned off or frustrated because of the presence of unnecessary committees and too much talk. Democracy will exist informally in the points of view expressed in all the zines. But why this need to superimpose a bureaucracy on top of an activity which basically wants to be independent of any authoritarian dictates. If people see something as being important then if it is important enough to them, they will do something about it themselves. The goals of the hobby are misunderstood if it is stated: look, here's a group of people engaged in a pasttime, let's organize that group, or let's set up an elected group of officials to do great things for us and to solve any future ills. Why this need to be so dogmatic or totalitarian about the whole thing --- its almost a case of a high school civics class gone amuck. The only people who really benefit from a nicely constituted organization are those who revel in cause of bureaucratic tangles as an end in itself.

This all means, I suppose that I am an advocate of a laissez faire attitude towards the ongoing disintegration of the IDA. This organization has accomplished some impressive things in its day and I am not yet ready to renounce my membership in it. But because of this idea of democracy, some people who are in it are bogging it down, and yet they can't be kicked out and because its a large democratic organization everyone assumes that someone else can be found to do the work. The logical conclusion that I have come to is that the absence of the IDA would not be catastrophic to the hobby. Smaller, informal groups could provide all the services without the distressing clutter which immobilizes a large group such as the IDA. One such group operates in Canada and insures games from being orphaned. A number of small groups could be listed on the game flyer to help direct novices. The Boardman Number Custodian and games records, and games archives would be maintained by dedicated people. The role of the Ombudsman and the viability of the Judicial Committee could continue.

At present, as in the past, anything that was ever achieved was done so because individuals cared enough to do the legwork. A large organization is not needed to give a person or committee authority, validity, or inducement to do anything. Co-existing groups would serve the hobby far better than one monolithic group. There would be a far greater likelihood that more would be accomplished and that individual opinions would be expressed. Any individual could belong to as many or as few groups as he wanted. He wouldn't be handicapped by not belonging to any group. Look at the trouble in Great Britian with the National Games Club and the independents. We do not need to create a new IDA, nor need we form a Canadian mini-IDA. What we really need is no formal group at all, or else a group which exists only to give the barest cohesion needed to keep the hobby healthy. Its is time to do, not time to pay some dues and elect someone else to do something for you.

((Harry as you can see was preoccupied with the IDA, so he viewed the hobby thru the prism of that issue. Most How-the-Hobby-is-Now accounts tend to be focused in such a way, tho perhaps not to the extreme that this one was (one exception was Peery's view of 1985 in the recent DW.)

((Altho the IDA was to last for another 4 years or so, most of what it was to accomplish had already been done by then. Altho Harry's argument is theoretically true, in practice, it hasn't worked out that way. Harry makes reference to the fact that the official Ombudsman and the Judicial Committee could continue. For practical purposes, they disappeared when IDA ceased to be effective. The Judicial Committee was a very useful mechanism for dealing with hobby disputes. Since it had the imprimature of the IDA behind it, and its members were, I believe, elected, as was the Hobby Ombudsman, it could be a lot more effective in providing an "official" investigation and resolution of hobby disputes. That sort of organization backing didn't make their decisions any more "right", but it did allow such an outfit to come into existence and function. I think the hobby would have been a lot better off if such a hobby-supported mechanism had existed during some of the nasty disputes we've had over the last few years. The IDA put out some special handbooks and publications. When the IDA died, these stopped too, and did not resume until Linsey took it upon himself to create a Novice Package a few years back. Harry's notion of a variety of "co-existing groups" is just a prescription for competition and ultimately overlapping services and chaos. The IDA could raise money; the idea of a tax on DipCon tournaments didn't exist yet. The hobby is no longer cohesive enough to support a mass-membership organization, which is, I think a shame, for other hobbies (chess, bridge) have profited by such an approach.))



((Now, lets skip back 10 years earlier to Feb 1966. This comes from Diplomania #2, and is by Don Miller))

#### DIRECTORY OF POSTAL DIPLOMACY GAMES AND MAGAZINES

- BARAD-DUR** (Jack L. Chalker, 5111 Liberty Heights Ave., Baltimore, Md., 21207)  
 Games 1965R (thru issue #10; now in ORTHANC), S, T, and 1966D. Sub 10 for \$1.00.  
 Substitute players needed. Games Bureau Diplomacy Division 'zine. Recommended.
- BIG BROTHER** (Charles N. Gainsel, 120 Eighth Ave., Clarion, Penna., 16214)  
 Game being formed for Gamesmasters only; after that ?. Sub 10 for \$1.00.
- BROEDINGNAG** (John A. McCallum, P&M Section, SES, Ralston, Alberta, Canada)  
 Game 1964C. Sub 10 for \$1.00. Plenty of discussion re rules, etc. Recommended.
- COSTAGUANA** (Conrad von Metzke, P.O. Box 192, Jamul, California, 92035)  
 Games 1965F, M, and 1966B. Sub 12 issues for \$1.00. What we've seen looks good.
- DIPLOMANIA** (Donald L. Miller, 12315 Judson Road, Wheaton, Md., 20906)  
 Games 1965V, 1966E, and a new game not yet assigned a Boardman number. Diplomacy Supplement to THE WSFA JOURNAL. Openings for Diplomacy games of all types. Subs \$1.00 per year via 3rd class mail, and \$1.50 per year via 1st class mail.
- FIDGELY** (Edwin "Mac" Jeffrey, % Conrad von Metzke, P.O. Box 192, Jamul, Calif, 92035)  
 One game about to begin; after that ? Sub rates 12 issues for \$1.00.
- GRAUSTARK** (John Boardman, 592 16th St., Brooklyn, New York, 11218)  
 Games 1963A (won FO6 by Derek Nelson, Italy), 1964A (won F11 by James MacKenzie, Turkey), 1965A, JT (won W02, through resignation of other team, by team of Italy (Robert Lake), Germany (Derek Nelson), and Russia (John Davey)), L, NT, and Q.  
 Sub 10 for \$1.00. Highly recommended; a "must" for all Diplomaniacs!
- LONELY MOUNTAIN** (Charles Wells, 3678 Lindholm Road, Cleveland, Ohio, 44509)  
 Games 1965P, 1966A. Sub 10 for \$1.00. Recommended.
- LUSITANIA** (Bernie Kling, 237 South Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif., 90212)  
 Game 19650, with a new game starting soon. Sub 10 for \$1.00.
- NORSTRILLIA** and **NORSTRILLIA NOTES** (Dan Alderson, 6720 Day St., Tujunga, Calif, 91042)  
 "Super Diplomacy" games; two in progress. Free. Write to Dan for more info.
- ORTHANC** (Ronald W. Bounds, 649 N. Paca St., Baltimore, Md., 21201)  
 Games 1965R (in BARAD-DUR through Winter, 1903) and W. Sub 10 for \$1.00. Games Bureau Diplomacy Division 'zine. Off-shoot of BARAD-DUR.
- OSGILIATH** (Jerald Jacks, 4203 Labyrinth Road, Baltimore, Md., 21215)  
 Two games being formed. Sub 10 for \$1.00. Games Bureau Diplomacy Division 'zine.

RURITANIA (John Boardman, 592 16th St., Brooklyn, New York, 11218)

Game 1963B. Sub 10 for \$1.00. This will fold soon, as 1963B is about to end.

STAB (John Konig, 318 South Belle Vista, Youngstown, Ohio, 44509)

Includes TRANTOR (John Smythe) and MASSIF (John Konig). Games 1964D, 1965E and U; new game forming. Sub 10 for \$1.00. Plenty of material. Recommended.

WILD 'N WOOLY (Charles G. Brannan, 224 South Lincoln, Spokane, Washington, 99204)

Games 1965B, C, D, G, H, I, K, and 1966C; new games being formed (one per month in 1966); games of all speeds available. Sub 20 for \$1.00. Recommended.

Now defunct -- FREDONIA (Boardman, 1964B, won F09 by John Smythe, Austria-Hungary);

over-the-board games: WORLDIP and WITDIP (Bruce Pelz, Box 100, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, Calif., 90024); THE GRAND FENWICK GAZETTE (Lon Atkins, Box 228, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27514); TUPPENCE HA'PENNY (Ed Baker, Apt #4, 619 S. Hobart, L.A., Calif, 90004); LA GAZETTE D'EUROPE (Bill Blackbeard, 311 Iris Ave, Corona del Mar, Calif.).

THE GAMESLETTER (Don Miller) o-o of the Games Bureau, is also starting a game.

((Quite a change from now, where we need an entire zine to list everyone. And look at those subs rates! Where are these people now? Jack Chalker has become a successful science fiction writer, with several novels in print. Charles Reinsel became a very shadowy figure later in the 70s, and as late as 1981 was still running a game, and may still be for all I know. John McCallum lives in Medicine Hat, Alberta, but has no real contact with the hobby. von Metzke resumed publication in 1983 after a break of some years. Don Miller is dead, Jeffrey I don't know anything about. Boardman is still going strong of course. Wells is still in Ohio, but has no contact with the hobby. Kling folded his zine amid great disgrace. Alderson, Bounds, and Jacks, I don't know. Konig is dead, Smythe is out of the hobby. Brannan resurfaced not too long ago as Steve Cartier, and the others I don't know. There were a few other zines that he missed == Asgard, Economic Diplomacy, Mesklin, and a few more. And that how the hobby was, 20 years ago.))

# CITEX

((One of the biggest scandals ever to hit the hobby was the CITEX or "Gordon Anderson" affair. Accounts of it appeared in a number of zines, and it was something that unfolded over a period of time, not all at once. I'll be reprinting the account which appeared in Impassable #61, Feb 8, 1976. We start with a letter from Gordon Anderson to Scott Rosenberg, dated Jan 12, 1976))

Gordon Anderson: I have been disappointed with the actions of the IDA Council in the past two years. It (the council) under the leadership of Edi Birsan has boiled down to one thing: Edi Birsan and Company's feeble attempt to drive me from the hobby and the IDA ((he then goes on with some complaints against Birsan and Gil Neiger, including failing to publish his campaign statement, publishing libelous material about him, etc)) ...4) Viking systems did not give Michael Rocamora ((the winner of the Citex 75 Diplomacy tournament))\*5) Allan Calhamer was given the cash for the prizes at Citex-75 and DipCon VIII ((the former hosted the latter)), and he also selected the trophies. He was supposed to pay the winners of the tournament when the tournament was over. Mr. Calhamer still has in his possession over \$1000 worth of models and over \$100 worth of printing that he was entrusted with and has not returned to Viking Systems, Inc. This material was used to run the DipCon portion of Citex-75. Mr. Calhamer has yet to provide myself or Viking Systems with a list of who won or even who entered the Diplomacy Tournament. In addition, Mr. Calhamer has refused to talk to me on the phone or even to answer my letters. 8) I have received 4 letters on the subject of the prize money ((which he then briefly lists)) Until I had received the letter from Mr. Wartenberg I had firmly believed that there were no problems left over from Citex-75 which affected the general public. I am now embarking on a course that will correct this problem that has recently come to my attention. \* a bad check

Allan Calhamer: ((Letter to John Baker)

1) Gordon Anderson has never given me any cash, or any money in any other form, ever in his life, for any purpose whatsoever. 2) I did not select the trophies for the Diplomacy Tournament of 1975. Gordon selected the 7 trophies for the tournament. He then asked me to have the winners choose their trophies from among the 7. I did so. 3) At the same time that he talked to me about the trophies, Gordon asked me to tell the winners that their prize money would be mailed to them during the next week. I told them that Gordon had asked me to relay that message. 4) During the tournament, the winner of the 1974 tournament, Mike Rocamora, advised me verbally that he had never received his prize for the 1974 tournament. That tournament was directed by Gordon Anderson. I played no part in its management. If I had known earlier that the prize had not been paid for the previous tournament, I would not have agreed to direct the 1975 tournament. 5) I have never taken, and do not have, any property of any kind belonging to Gordon Anderson. I suppose the "models" he refers to are the metal markers in the form of tanks and ships which he had for use in the Diplomacy games. These markers were gathered together at the end of the tournament and left in the playing room, which was part of the complex of rooms being used for the game show. That show was still going on under Gordon's direction. Incidentally, the value of those pieces was probably about \$20, not \$1000. When I first brought out Diplomacy in 1959, I priced markers of the same size and configuration, painted in 7 colors. At that time, Tootsietoy quoted them to me at 7/8¢ each. I would guess that similar pieces would be worth no more than about a nickel apiece today ((and even that estimate assumes a very drastic rate of inflation!)). There were 6 boards in play, of which at least two were using wooden pieces. The remaining 4 boards had to borrow pieces from board to board as the games went on, suggesting that there were fewer than the standard number of 112 pieces per board available. About 400 pieces as a nickel each extends to about \$20, not \$1000. The only printing I had done was \$8 worth, not \$100. This printing was designed by myself, let out to be printed myself, paid for by myself, brought to the tournament by myself, and taken away again by myself. 7) Immediately after the tournament, I mailed a list of prizewinners, in their proper order, to Gordon, retaining a copy. 8) A few days after the tournament, I sent Gordon a list of the results of each game of the tournament. This list necessarily contained the names of all the participants. 9) Gordon sent me just one letter after the tournament. Not a single one of his current charges was mentioned in the letter. I replied, instructing him to communicate with me only by letter. He has never communicated with me again. ((The issue also contains an earlier letter, from Calhamer to Wartenburg. Some of it covers the same ground as the above letter, but there was some additional material which I'll quote here:))

Calhamer: 1) At no time did I receive or handle any money at all, for any purpose whatsoever, in connection with the Diplomacy tournament held in Chicago in Aug 1975. 2) Just before the tournament started, I made a statement to the players assembled to the effect that I had nothing to do with the financial aspects of the tournament. That statement is still true today....5) By the end of the tournament, I had decided that I did not wish to cooperate with Gordon in any future projects. Therefore, I hung up the telephone upon hearing his voice and sent him a letter, stating that our cooperation in connection with the tournament was ended, that I did not wish to cooperate with him in any further project, and that he should communicate with me only by letter...7) Gordon never asked me to send him any material....

Lew Pulsipher: ....Viking Systems accepted entry fees for the Citex 1975 Diplomacy tournament, and Viking Systems is responsible for providing the prizes of that tournament. Any trouble that Viking Systems may have had with the GM, Allan Calhamer, or anyone else is irrelevant. VS is obligated to pay. If (and I do not believe it for a minute) Viking systems or Gordon Anderson has been victimized by someone, that is its/his fault, and he must take up the problem with that person.. Gordon Anderson states that Allan Calhamer has not even provided him with a list of who entered this tournament. But VS collected fees, not Calhamer; how could Calhamer even know who entered, except as he was told by VS.....((The editor then added later on:))

John Boyer: ....I printed it mostly because I feel this is no feud, but a very bad ((example)) of how any erratic individual can disrupt the hobby and ruin its meager reputation....IDA and the people it represent, just can't allow Anderson to ruin its reputation and that of the hobby!

((A few issues later, on the cover of #64, April 1976, the fotostat copy of the \$80 check appeared, along with the bank note refusing payment because the check had not been signed. It was drawn by "Viking Systems, INC". A further editorial appeared in Paroxysm #28, May 2, 1976, which notes that the matter was taken up by the IDA Ombudsman, and written up in the April 11, 1976 issue of Due Process. Robert Correll continues:))

....It is my understanding that Bob Wartenburg attempted to take legal action in suit for the prize money he won at Citex 75. However, his legal counsel was reported to have advised him that suit for a sum as small as \$225 is not worth his while. It would appear that a hobby of the common people has few legal alternatives because its members cannot afford to seek justice thru the courts...As a result of these unanswered questions against the reputation of VS, I will not attend Citex 76.....

((And indeed, I believe that gameshow never got off the ground. DipCon was set for Baltimore (my first DipCon!), even tho Gordon advertised that DipCon would be held with Citex-76. It was a very sad episode in the hobby's history))



((And now for some British history. Our story begins in 1901 and all that.... #38,

with a letter by John Piggott, in which he reveals that "Richard Walkerdine" is one of his pseudonyms. That prompted the following British History in #39, Nov 1974, by "The Real Richard Walkerdine"))

So the mincing John Piggott has seen fit to disclose our little subterfuge, eh? A pity, as I was just getting used to my assumed roles. All that he says is perfectly true, of course, tho there is a wee bit more to it than friend John has actually admitted. But the time for caution is now gone, so what else can I do but tell all?

The story really begins in the Autumn of 1971. I had already known John for more than a year at the time, and it was during one of our numerous FtF games with Hartley Patterson that the three of us conceived the idea of taking over the entire British Diplomacy hobby. At that time, you will recall, there were only two zines in existence: Hartley's War Bulletin, with a small circulation and only a couple of games in it; and Don Turnbull's Albion/Courier empire, which at the time constituted some 75% of the hobby. Clearly it would be difficult, if not impossible, to stage an all-out assault on the Turnbull edifice, so rather than suffer a catastrophic defeat at the hands of this giant we laid our plans for a much more subtle campaign --- plans which were of a very long-term nature indeed!

The basic plan was to induce a large expansion of the hobby, outside the Turnbull empire, while at the same time maintaining absolute control over this expanding section. Then, when our "captive" portion was of sufficient size, we could gobble up the Albion/Courier segment and be the absolute masters of the entire hobby! This sought-after expansion was to be obtained by the simple expedient of starting up any number of additional zines -- some in our own names, and some under pseudonyms, ---- until, between them, they had a readership (and hence power) far in excess of anything that Turnbull

could manage. The first moves were the following January; John started two zines, Ethil (in his own name) and Bellicus (using the pseudonym "Will Haven"). At about the same time, Hartley launched his second zine, XL - for this he adapted the pseudonym "Collin Hemming". At that time, I hadn't started any zines at all, as it was my job to attempt to infiltrate the Turnbull empire and effect what sabotage I could, and clearly, in order to do that my name had to be "clean". Everything went well to begin with, and all the zines grew rapidly in size and circulation. Indeed, progress was so spectacular that John even launched a third zine, Der Krieg, using the name "Graham Jeffery" (he'd been drinking rather heavily at the time, and couldn't think of a better name, unfortunately).

But then the first faint rumblings of the impending disaster! While sipping his vodka (which, as usual, I'd paid for!) at his usual corner in the "Globe" one Thursday night, John casually mentioned that he was going to start up another zine, Mad Policy - and that he was going to run it in my name! He explained this away by maintaining that a zine, supposedly run by me, would take up so much of "my" time, that it wouldn't allow me time for any other activities at all --- and so, of course, any suspicions that Turnbull might have about my clandestine activities within his organization would appear to be groundless. In short, he was offering me "cover".

I naturally pretended to agree with him, but the very next day I began my investigations into the suspicions that he had aroused. I won't bore you with the details of my six-week stakeout in a hastily-converted attic opposite the Turnbull mansion in Cambridge, nor do I wish to disclose the dreadful events I witnessed in nearby Jesus College ((where John was a student)). But suffice it to say that within a few short weeks I had assembled all the facts of this strange and dreadful affair. I now knew the truth: John Piggott was Don Turnbull's illegitimate son! Far from helping Hartley and myself control the whole of British Diplomacy, his plan was to use us as mere stepping stones to his final objective: control of the Turnbull empire! To his warped mind, it appeared that his natural father had robbed him of his rightful inheritance by having him born a bastard, and this whole affair was no more than the result of his terrible revenge!

What could I do, alone and friendless against the already considerable power of Piggott. My first act was to disclose the whole sordid business to Hartley. But mon-of-the-world tho he was, the sordid details of double-dealing and intrigue were too much for even his strong stomach ((in which case, one wonders why he got involved in this whole plot in the first place)); he immediately folded XL (tho I continued to run a couple of games for him under the pseudonym "Jeff Oliver"), retired to his house in the country, devoted himself solely to War Bulletin and took no further part in the affair. I was on my own again.

After several days of solid thought I realized that the only way to fight fire was with fire itself. I went to see Don Turnbull, and told him the whole story. Much to my surprise (for I had had a very biased picture of him from Piggott) he proved to be both sympathetic and understanding. Together we devised a plan to thwart Piggott of his evil ambitions, and within a month, we were putting it into effect. Obviously, I couldn't act opening against Piggott in my own name, or all would be revealed to him, but by that time, we were all used to working under assumed names (Don himself had already begun preparations even then for the creation of the fictitious "Mick Bullock", in order to expand his empire with another zine - but of course, I hardly need to tell you that, eh Mick, er, Don?) and the resulting complexity proved to be no great handicap.

A few weeks later a "Graeme Levin" had launched the British Diplomacy Club - with its game run, naturally, by Don Turnbull. Solely to show which side he was really on, Hartley himself took on one of the early EDC games as well. Soon after this, we created "Richard Sharp" to run further games, and this was followed by still greater expansion in the names of "Colin Bennett", "Richard Scott", "John Coombe", and "Ken Jones". Later on, we dropped the name "Graeme Levin" (it was a silly name anyhow) and concentrated most of the activity under "Richard Sharp". Later still we added "Les Pimley", "Craid Nye", "Adrien Baird", "Doug Wakefield", and, in recent weeks, "Pete Birks" to the list.

During this time of course, Piggott was hardly inactive! Within a couple of weeks of the founding of BDC he had hit back at us by starting Grafeti in the name of "Brian Yare", and this was followed the next year by Our 'Enry, Bolshevik Star and Tales From the Black Forest - and others have appeared since. But by this time, it was too late. We had now gained the upper hand and Piggott was in decline ((note the subtle bias in this account. For his creations, he gave the pseudonyms, not the zine titles. For Piggott's, he does just the reverse.))

Proof of this last statement can be readily seen in the last 6 months' events; the NGC has been reorganized and is now run by a committee (and no one can fail to notice that committee members such as "scott", "Bullock", "Sharp", "Pimpley", etc were



among our first creations); and many of Piggott's zines are now falling by the wayside ---the demise of Ethil was, of course, our greatest victory, but the current doubts about TFTBF, Grafeti, OurEntry, Bolshhevik Star etc also serve to show which way the wind is blowing. In short, the threat of total domination by Piggott now seems to be averted. He's still there, of course, and will no doubt continue to be a thorn in our side, but the main danger now seems to be past.

Some might think it a pity that characters such as "Sharp", "Bullock", "Pimley", "Yare", "Sherrad", etc are no more than figments of the imaginations of Piggott, Turnbull and myself - but bear in mind that at least 150 NGC members are really Piggott in various guises, and most of the others are really Don or me. Personally I doubt that there are more than about 14 different people in the whole of the British Hobby! Sad perhaps, but then the truth was bound to be disclosed one day. ((Or part of it, anyhow. If all the zines that appeared during that period were just fronts, how is it that these few characters managed to prevent so much as a single "real" zine from appearing. 'Twas quite a feat -- I wonder how they did it.))



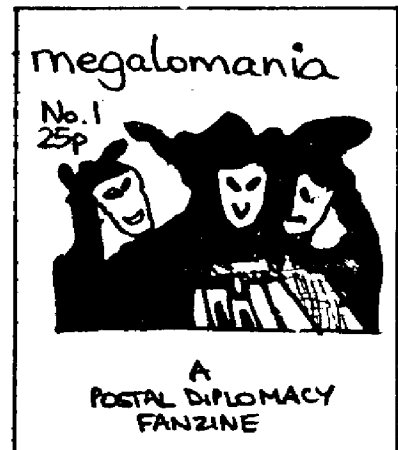
((We move now from the entire British hobby to a single zine. Chris Tringham was one of the more introspective publishers, and here is his own view of how his zine got underway. It is from Megalomania #25, March, 1980))

Megalomania was "born" on the 68 bus sometime in late 1977. Anyone who regularly travels on buses will realise how boring that hour in the morning and hour in the evening must have been, and why I spent most of that time "thinking" (=daydreaming). Having been introduced to the Diplomacy hobby earlier that year, I read zines and concluded that there wasn't really that much to it. I was already installed in the unimaginably powerful post of NGC Membership Secretary, and that caused me to go to Games Day where I met a few people in the hobby. Although I didn't realise it at the time, this was a fairly high-powered group (not literally, of course - this is the Diplomacy hobby after all): Richard Sharp, John Piggott, Eric Willis, Steve Doubledya, Richard Walkerdine, Pete Cousins, Bob Howes, Tony Crouch and one or two others, including Ian Lee and Paul Openshaw. I was very grateful for this opportunity to meet a smallish number of people rather than going to a large con at which I knew no-one (which was why I didn't go to Midcon II).

Having purchased an El Cheapo Smith-Corona Electric Hypewriter shortly after Christmas, it was just a matter of time before I started publishing. I decided on March 17th as the first deadline, mainly because it was after the end of my 2nd year exams and before I started a new job. As things turned out, the job fell through (pity, cos it should have been interesting) and I spent some of the time that I should have been revising on the zine instead. I passed the exams, so that wasn't a problem. Neither was the lack of a job, initially at least, since it left me with plenty of spare time to type up the zine.

Like most other new editors, I "borrowed" most of my ideas from other zines. The three that most influenced me were Dolchstoss, Greatest Hits and Ethil the Frog. It was similarities with the latter that generated most comment in initial reviews; unsurprisingly, since they looked quite similar and I have the same attitude to the hobby and zine production that had made Piggott such a controversial figure.

Issue 1 was greeted favourably throughout the known universe, and looking back on it now isn't anything like as embarrassing as the same exercise would be for some other editors (he says, trying to be as modest as possible). I managed to say most of the important things fairly clearly, and even threw in a bit of controversy for good measure.



Issue 2 was notable only for the adaptation of my typewriter to accept carbon-film ribbons, which resulted in a much cleaner and more pleasing appearance, and my first con report. Not bad, and quite interesting to re-read: it struck me particularly that I seem to have an awful lot of games, though at least they were multi-player games played in the right spirit (Gin, apparently). One thing I remember about that issue is waiting anxiously for the Zine Poll results to arrive on Monday morning, as I had the rest of the zine typed up.

Issue 3 was described on the cover as Ethil the Frog 17, and condemned by Sharp for that reason. My reviews of Entente (bad), Griffin (good with reservations), Pigmy Greatest Hits (both good) and ADC (neutral) all seem very reasonable, and even fair (or at least accurate).

In a remarkable display of over-enthusiasm, I managed to get issue 4 out on time in spite of going to a con over the deadline weekend. The con report isn't too hot in places, particularly when I describe a Chinese Restaurant as "Indian", though there are moments when I seem to have got rather nearer the truth (my characterization of Pete Birks, on the basis of that one weekend, still seems pretty accurate). Not a particularly good issue, showing the haste in which it was prepared.

Issue 5 was A4 side-stapled, and an experiment. In parts it worked well, but overall it was a disappointment. The letter column was good, but little did we know that 'newcomer to the hobby' Mike Jervis would cause so much trouble to us all. Reading through all these early issues, the main complaint I have is that I expressed my views very badly - I know what I meant, but it's embarrassing seeing how I failed to say things clearly.

Issue 6 is pretty dire, and the less said about it the better.

Issue 7 is even worse, with an absolutely dreadful Eurocon report.

Issue 8 was a great deal better, though the printing was the worst ever. It features my best ever con report, for the best large con so far, Polycon.

It was also the start of a ridiculous "debate" on the hardcore/softcore, which arose from the fact that a group of us spent a lot of the

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weekend either at Ron Fisher's or in the Lamb & Packet. I refuse to get involved in this argument again, but would refer readers to Pete Birks' interesting and sensible comments in the lettercol this time. Talking of which, 8 includes a very silly letter from Ken Bain on this subject. I'm still intrigued by the description of the hardcore as 'potential has-beens', incidentally. Issue 8 was the first one after I started work in the DHSS, and shows a great deal more confidence and fluency than any of the earlier issues bar the first two, and I really like it a lot.

Issue 9 is very neat and tidy, due to the acquisition of this typewriter, and was the longest issue to date (24 pages). Although I rather strangely said that I'd like to forget issue 8 in it, I don't reckon it's actually such a good issue. Insubstantial is the best word, with very little (apart from the letter column) that is particularly interesting or worthwhile: I suppose the increased size caused me not to edit the material properly.

The praise heaped upon Issue 9 didn't surprise me at the time, but on reflection it seems very strange. I'm sure 10 is a far superior product, with a review of Ethil that I devoted a fair amount of time and thought to (poor sentence construction there - they shouldn't end with prepositions, should they?), but was well worth the effort (easily the best zine review I've ever done, and described by Birks as 'probably one

of the best zine analyses ever written'). The editorial was nicely vitriolic, and a short but interesting letter column filled a couple of pages. I also tried my hand at being a pundit, commenting on TV and the popular press.

Issue 11 is good, without actually being noteworthy: the only interesting bit is the zine reviews section, which is an excuse for writing about whatever happens interest me at the time.

Issue 12 featured two short but (I think) quite amusing con reports, on Adrien Baird's marvellous apres-Christmas hardcore-only Wairdcon, and Stabcon I. There's also a review of Ferkin. This subject became rather controversial, because I gave the zine several favourable reviews, then did a re-appraisal after Birks demolished it in GH. Jervis thinks that he only got a bad review because everyone worships Birks (or something like that). In fact, having read Pete's review, I couldn't really disagree with it - however I did enjoy the zine, and hoped that Mike would react to constructive criticism in an adult way. My review was far more constructive than Pete's, but Mike couldn't be expected to appreciate that, and the only pity about the fold was that he didn't quit at the top (after issue 3 in other words) and leave us with pleasant memories of Ferkin. I stand by my reviews, and would suggest that my only mistake was being uncritical and not looking at the zine objectively until Birks' review forced me.

Well, I think that's enough for this issue. I'll continue next time, and would welcome comments on issues 13-25 from anyone who can be bothered. Don't forget that copies of all issues bar 7 are available for 5p + postage. Send your money now....

(FROM PAGE 1)

those who made the wrong assumption). There's also a very funny variant, Melinda Holley with some practical advice on how to play in more than ten games at once, and a good-deal of throw-away writing. A pleasant surprise none-the-less.

W. Elmer Hinton 20 Almont Street Nashua, NH 03060 has published in Kaissa #100 his own Novice Publication, called "A Word to the Wise". It is heavily weighted to the issue of how games are run, which is discussed in much detail. He calls it a "preliminary step" toward a full fledged Novice Handbook, and its not as ambitious as Master of Deceit --- it doesn't have, for example, advice on playing individual countries. On the other hand, it doesn't disseminate false information about DD either, so thats a plus. It suffers from the same disadvantage as "The Gamer's Guide to Diplomacy", viz, that its all written by one person, so there's just one viewpoint. On the other hand, that gives it a certain coherency. At 21 pages, its a bit pricy at \$2, but its a right interesting essay.

A few issues back, I made reference to a British game with a very beligerant opening, but the fall 1901 moves in 1985HF (in Costaguana) may have topped that. Thirteen out of the 22 orders failed. No contested move succeeded. England and Turkey made two unsuccessful attempts to take SCs, and Russia had three! Four neutrals were unseized, all because of standoffs.

What a happy coincidence. I'm out of things to say and room (not) to say them at the same time (yes, thats why I skipped the line between the last paragraph and this one --- anything to take up extra space). DD will not be joining the hobby's microtrend toward using borders on the pages. These were first used, I think, in the Canadian zine Gassed, then later in SNAFU! and Excelsior. In the latter, they at least look classy, whereas in DW they just give the zine a cramped look. But not here. Nossir, an artiste like Perch can make his zine look cramped without having to resort to an articial device like borders.

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Heroes are created by popular demand, sometimes out of the scantiest materials . . . such as the apple that William Tell never shot, the ride that Paul Revere never finished, the flag that Barbara Fritchie never waved.

--Gerald White Johnson  
*American Heroes and Hero-Worship*

\* and the Cherry tree that George Washington never cut down.

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